



# LLANTRISANT TOWN TRUST FREEMEN'S NEWSLETTER

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## GUILDHALL'S FINAL PHASE TO BEGIN

**Llantrisant Town Trust is delighted to announce that the final piece of the funding jigsaw is now in place and completion of the Guildhall is in sight.**

Due to further support from HLF Cymru, Cadw, Garfield Weston Foundation and the Trust's own fundraising efforts, the last £300,000 needed to complete the interior of the building is in place.

As the local centre of power for almost 700 years which governed the ancient borough, the Guildhall has the opportunity to become central to the community of Llantrisant once again as a heritage and visitors' centre.

The final phase will allow contractors to fit ceilings, plaster and paint all the internal walls, fit the kitchen and toilets, complete the electrical, plumbing and drainage work, and install the lift, stairs and final floor finishes.

High specification security cabinets and a full exhibition display will be installed on both floors.

The Trust has also commissioned a full-size mannequin of a Welsh longbowman dressed in the uniform worn at the Battle of Crecy.

A longcase clock made by a Llantrisant clockmaker in 1780 has been traced and will go on display along with a showcase of Dr William Price items and a large oil painting of Sir David Evans, the Llantrisant-born Lord Mayor of London which is on loan from Cardiff Council.

To ensure its long-term sustainability, the Guildhall will also become a wedding venue and offer a wide-range of activities including workshops, rolling exhibitions, intimate dining experiences, concerts, evening lectures and even outdoor cinema.

## CLERK'S REPORT

**Llantrisant Town Trust has enjoyed another very busy year in its history.**

We continue to focus our time on the maintenance and upkeep of Freeman's lands and extensive conservation work was undertaken on the Common and Graig.

In particular we are grateful to Cardiff Conservation Volunteers for their work to build a bridge for walkers of the Common and for cutting back overgrowth on the Graig.

At the Court Leet Ceremony we enrolled 16 new members to the Freeman's Roll and enjoyed a dinner in the company of Edward III and the Bishop of Durham! We are delighted to announce that the final funding package is available to us for the completion of Llantrisant Guildhall and we hope the interior and exhibition fit out will be finished by the summer of 2019.

The Trust has been involved in a whole range of fundraising activities towards the project, from concerts and guided history walks to another successful Big Picnic on the Castle Green.

We look forward to another busy year ahead and hope you will volunteer to support the Trust in its many endeavours.

Diolch o galon!

*Dean Powell, Clerk*

## FREEMAN FOCUS

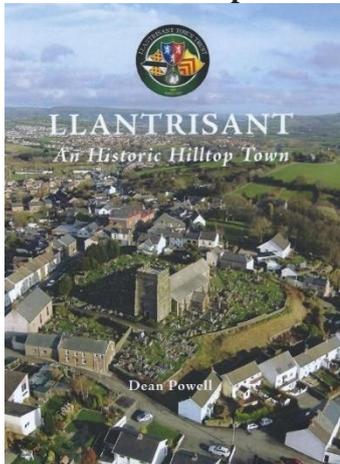
### Guided History Walks

The Town Trust has organised a series of guided history walks of Llantrisant during the past year with proceeds going towards the Guildhall Restoration Scheme. If you're interested in finding out more about this fascinating hilltop town, email [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

### Trustee Gareth Honoured

Gareth Griffiths decided not to stand for re-election as a member of Llantrisant Town Trust. In honour of his contribution to the Trust, and particularly the Guildhall Project, a crystal decanter and glasses was presented to him on behalf of the Freemen.

### An Historic Hilltop Town



Have you bought a copy of "An Historic Hilltop Town" yet? Priced £6 each, the book was launched by Llantrisant Town Trust. For copies contact [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

### Freemen's Enrolment

Application forms for the 2019 Court Leet are now available online at [www.llantrisant.net](http://www.llantrisant.net). They must be submitted by April 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 and applications are £100.00 each.

## COURT LEET CEREMONY 2018



### Court Leet 2018 was another memorable event which saw a significant number of applicants enrolled as Freemen.

Owing to the unavailability of the Guildhall, the Court Leet was held once more in the Parish Hall on Swan Street and welcomed applicants from Thailand and Australia.

In total 16 new Freemen were entered onto the Roll. A number of applicants were enrolled in absentia.

The Court Leet Dinner was also another outstanding success with almost 150 in attendance.

This year's Guest Speakers were two members of the Lions and Lilies who gave a fascinating account of "The Night of Crecy" as King Edward III and the Bishop of Durham.

## FREEMEN'S HALL SCHEME LAUNCHED

### Would you like to remember a Freeman in your family at their ancestral home of the Llantrisant Guildhall?

A Freeman's Hall is being designed within the building which allows families to include a lasting tribute to a late Freeman.

Following a donation of £100, a picture of the Freeman is mounted and framed along with a short biography and will be hung in the Guildhall.

To date around 20 Freemen are being remembered in this way.

All of the proceeds from the new Freeman's Hall will help fund the final phase of the Guildhall restoration and also support its long-term sustainability as a heritage and visitors' centre.

The current Freeman's Roll has more than 5,000 names listed since 1724 and we estimate that at least 2,000 Freemen are currently living somewhere in the world.

# LLANTRISANT COMMON BRIDGE BUILT BY CONSERVATION TEAM

Freemen of Llantrisant are indebted to the Cardiff Conversation Volunteers for building a new walkway and bridge on the Common.



Over two weekends the volunteers worked tirelessly at Llantrisant Common to try and rectify a long-standing problem for walkers.

The existing bridge was too short the surrounding ground was too boggy to navigate for many of our visitors.

Llantrisant Community Council funded the materials and with the support of Cardiff Conversation Volunteers, we now have a brand new walkway and bridge to not only help walkers enjoy the Common safely, but provide further protection for our rare flora and fauna. Thank you to the volunteers and the Community Council for their incredible support!



## FREEMAN FOCUS

### Court Leet Dinner

The next Court Leet Dinner will take place at Llantrisant RFC on Friday May 10 2019. Tickets for the Freemen-only dinner are priced £30.00 and are now on sale from [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

### Valedictions 2018

It is with deep regret that we announce the passing of the following Freemen: Ralph Mortimer (2239), Eric Williams (2380), Alwyn Griffiths (2254), Rod Taylor (3061), Anthony Rees (4392), Gwynne Ferris (2252) and Leonard Morgan (2508)

### Remembrance Sunday

Llantrisant Town Trust are inviting all Freemen families to join them at a Remembrance Service in Llantrisant Parish Church at 9am on Sunday November 11 to commemorate the Centenary of the end of World War I. The Freemen will be remembered alongside all those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

### Wayleave Agreements

We are grateful to the support of our chartered surveyors John Jeremy and Jeremy Liley for their work in monitoring our wayleave agreements. All of the agreements have been reviewed and now brought in line. All proceeds from wayleaves go towards the maintenance and upkeep of the Common lands.

### Freeman's Database

Do you receive regular emails from Llantrisant Town Trust which bring you up to date with the latest news? Join our database of hundreds of Freemen by sending your email details to [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

# LLANTRISANT CELEBRATES BIG PICNIC 2018 AS HUNDREDS VISIT

Another wonderful celebration of life in the community of Llantrisant took place with the Big Picnic!



**Organised by Llantrisant Town Trust, the Big Picnic is now in its second year and welcomed a host of stallholders, entertainers and plenty of visitors on one of the hottest days of the year.**

The Castle Green was filled to capacity as families and friends took their picnic baskets, blankets and bottles of prosecco to celebrate this successful community event.

The Big Picnic welcomed 25 stallholders including Gill Fairground Amusements who provided plenty of entertainment for the children.

The free event also saw entertainers giving their time to perform to the enthusiastic crowd. They included Cor y Bryn, Cor Tadau Trisant, RCT Community Band, The Semantics, The Accidentals, Rechoir, Rua, Mike Morgan & Richard Jones and The Unforgiven.

The family fun day also raised £1,100 for the Guildhall Restoration Scheme which is now reaching its final phase. Organiser Dean Powell said: "Llantrisant's Big Picnic was a very successful community event which clearly everyone enjoyed. We were blessed with good weather, plenty of great entertainment and activities which certainly drew the crowds.

"We are very grateful for the kind donations which helped us raise a good amount towards the Guildhall project and have decided to make The Big Picnic an annual event in Llantrisant old town."

## WELSH LORD SUPPORTS GUILDHALL

Llantrisant Guildhall welcomed the Welsh Minister Lord Elis-Thomas who expressed his delight at the £1.4million project.



The Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport viewed the medieval court house. At the invitation of Pontypridd Assembly Member Mick Antoni, Lord Elis-Thomas met with members of the Guildhall Trust who have worked tirelessly during the past six years to see their project come to fruition.

Lord Elis-Thomas said: "The Trustees and volunteers can be rightly proud of all they have achieved to date in the conservation and refurbishment of this remarkable building.

"The Guildhall is already an important civic building in the centre of Llantrisant and this scheme will help to secure its future as a major community facility. I am delighted that, through Cadw and Visit Wales, we have been able to provide grant support."

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## ARISE LLANTRISANT FREEMAN!

Freeman of Llantrisant Howard Groves has been honoured with an MBE from Her Majesty the Queen.



Howard, who was enrolled in 1972 when he lived in Worcester, received the award for his lifetime's commitment to education. Congratulations!

## FREEMAN FOCUS

### Friends of the Guildhall

Are you a Friend of the Guildhall? For £20.00 a year, members are kept regularly updated on work and are invited to special events.

There will also be money-off deals for activities within the Guildhall. Find out more [www.llantrisant.net](http://www.llantrisant.net)

### Memorial Cabinet Sponsors

Llantrisant Guildhall will house a number of cabinets to showcase the many artefacts relating to local history. The Trust has agreed to allow Freemen and their families to purchase a cabinet which will be dedicated to a relative of their choice. Cabinets vary in price from £5,000 to £15,000 depending on size and security measures.

If you would like to know more contact [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

### Welcome to the Trust

We are delighted to welcome chartered surveyor John Jeremy as a Freeman member of Llantrisant Town Trust. John has given an incredible amount of invaluable support to the Trust due to his professional expertise in this field.

We also welcomed Cllr Ron Hunt to the Trust during the year, Cllr Hunt joins us as a member of Llantrisant Community Council.

### Freeman's Website

Do you regularly visit the Freeman's website [www.llantrisant.net](http://www.llantrisant.net)? Please take some time to view the Freeman's Roll and let us know of any missing dates or information which we can upload to the master copy. We are also grateful for photographs of Freemen to complete the collection.

## FREEMAN FOCUS

### Fly Tipping and Litter

The dropping of litter and incidents of fly tipping continue to be a major concern. Recently Trustees David Powell and Gareth Rees undertook clean-up operations of the Billy Wynt. After working with Dean Clarke of RCT Council a series of warning signs are now in place along Castellau Road and further surveillance will take place.

### Common Pond Concerns

Amid growing concerns about the Common Pond we are pleased to say that scientific analysis by NRW shows no evidence of any pollution entering the pond. We are now considering further possible management measures.

### Bracken Raking

The Butterfly Conservation & Biodiversity Team have been working with Trustee Huw Rees to undertake a large amount of bracken-raking on the Common. Our gratitude to all of those involved.

### Town Trust 2018

Current Freeman Trustees are: Dean Powell (Clerk), Gareth Rees, Huw Rees, David Powell, John Dickason, Dewi John, Gareth Alexander, Stephen Powell, Derrick Pounder, Martin Hooker represents the Cambrian Archaeological Association, They are joined by Cllrs Allan Matheson, Ron Hunt and David Nicholas of Llantrisant Community Council and Freeman John Berry and John Jeremy.

## FREEMEN'S LAND: OUR COMMITMENT

**Llantrisant Town Trust's purpose is to protect the rights and lands of the Freeman and we continue to uphold that commitment throughout the generations.**



The Trust is responsible for the management of the Common, Cymdda Bach, Y Graig, Town Pump and Castle Green. They have also established a Guildhall Trust CIO to manage the Guildhall as a separate entity.

The Common covers 274 acres and Freeman's rights to graze animals there predates the Charter of 1346.

Because of the way the common has been managed, with the exclusion of sheep, an interesting and diverse flora has developed.

This has resulted in it being declared a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and it is managed to maintain the botanical diversity, and to provide suitable grazing for cattle and horses.

It is important for its variety of grassland, rich in different plant species while streams and patches of scrub add to the variety of habitat for insects, birds and other wildlife.

This year we have welcomed the large-scale investment by Natural Resources Wales. Wildlife Trust and Butterfly Conservation Team along with the support of the Cardiff Conservation Team in enhancing this land. Further bracken cutting is due to take place shortly.

Upkeep of the land, requires an enormous amount of maintenance work which is why we hope more Freeman will come forward and assist us in our endeavours. We are particularly grateful to Freeman Huw Rees, Dewi John and Henry Alexander for coordinating this year's activities.

Our other significant parcel of land is the isolated hill know as Y Graig and the Billy Wynt as its affectionately called.

Unfortunately it has been the victim of littering by irresponsible visitors and we want more Freeman to be vigilant in trying to keep this iconic tower and mountainside clear of debris.

Only a few years ago we re-introduced grazing animals to Y Graig and look forward to further work with South Wales Fire Service to cut the overgrown pathways shortly.

For further details of future community events held to clean the Common and Y Graig, follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

## TALENTED BROWNIES SUPPORT US!

Llantrisant 1<sup>st</sup> Brownies Group raised £300 by holding a talent show in aid of the Guildhall restoration project.



The group visited the medieval building on Llantrisant Castle Green to see where their donation will be spent.

Brown Owl Mel Giles said: "The Brownies often hold activities on the Castle Green and have a genuine interest in the work being carried out at the Guildhall.

"So when we decided to hold a talent show they wanted all of the proceeds to go towards the building.

"They were thrilled at the opportunity of seeing the Guildhall reach its final phase of restoration and are looking forward to taking part in the many activities that will be offered there once completed".

The talented group performed in a variety of roles from singers to dancers before a packed audience in the Parish Hall.

Guildhall Manager Dean Powell and fellow Guildhall Trust members John Dickason and John Jeremy presented the Brownies with a framed certificate to thank them for their support.

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## BILLY WYNT: WHAT WAS IT?

**On the isolated hilltop of Y Graig stands Llantrisant's famous tower and for generations we've argued over what it really is.....**

Tradition attributes its origins as a windmill dating from the 13<sup>th</sup> century but early records refer only to two mills found to the south and in Pentyrch.

The reference to the town mill being burnt several times during insurrections of the period may have been Felin Fawr at Maesyfelin.

The town mill may also be the same one as identified by the Royal Commission but there is no reference to a windmill whatsoever.

Billy Wynt was probably an auxillary tower to the castle, because it was blessed with a view of the main route through the Ely Valley - making it an ideal command post for the local garrison.

It would seem improbable to build a windmill in an area rich in water power. The Clun, the Mychydd and many smaller streams in the area provided sufficient power for water mills even in drought years.

The circular stone tower was restored as a folly in 1890 at the request of the Llantrisant Town Trust which maintains the structure.

## FREEMAN FOCUS

Find out more about the life of Lord Talbot, the fifth Freeman listed on the Roll dated 1724:



Charles Talbot, 1st Baron Talbot PC was a British lawyer and politician. He was Lord Chancellor of Great Britain from 1733 to 1737. Talbot was the eldest son of the Bishop of Durham, was educated at Eton and Oriel College, Oxford, and became a fellow of All Souls College in 1704.

He was called to the bar in 1711, and in 1717 was appointed solicitor general to the Prince of Wales. Having been elected a member of the House of Commons in 1720, he became Solicitor General in 1726, and in 1733 he was made lord chancellor and raised to the peerage with the title of Lord Talbot, Baron of Hensol.

Talbot enjoyed the reputation of being a wit; he was a patron of the poet James Thomson.

Talbot is also remembered as one of the two authors of the Yorke-Talbot slavery opinion whilst he was a crown law officer in 1729).

In 1709 he married Cecil, daughter and heiress of Charles Mathews of Castell y Mynach, Glamorgan, and the grand-daughter of David Jenkins of Hensol.

## FREEMAN GIFTS

Llantrisant Guildhall  
Shop is open for business!



A china mug featuring  
seven images of Llantrisant  
£5.99



Selection of six different  
Llantrisant coasters  
£2.99



Chrome keyring  
£3.49



Limited edition cufflinks  
£24.99



Five different postcards  
40p each / 3 for £1.00



Bronze Black Prince  
£18.99



Metal model of bowman  
£11.99

Find out more about  
these many bespoke items  
[dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

## A FREEMEN'S TALE: DVD LAUNCHED

Llantrisant Town Trust commissioned the making of a new documentary entitled "A Freeman's Tale" which gives viewers a remarkable insight into our tradition and its place in the history of the town.



Made by Colin Davis of Calan Films and taking more than six months to create, the film was premiered at the Court Leet Dinner in May 2018.

It features not only some outstanding aerial footage and a fascinating insight into the story of the hilltop town, but is brought together with some great interviews of Freeman and local residents.

The response to the 20-minute production has been incredibly positive and many Freeman have requested copies.

We are pleased to say that "A Freeman's Tale" is now available to purchase at £5.99 each. For further details contact [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

## HISTORY COLLECTION CREATED

Llantrisant Guildhall will house a unique collection of historic artefacts related specifically to the hilltop town.

During the past two years we have collected and catalogued almost 600 historic items for the Guildhall's Museum Accession Register.

This shows our commitment to receive historic items which we will photograph, catalogue and store as donations in our archive collection. It also means that we will be able to loan specific items from registered museums to allow updated exhibitions in the building.

Would you like to donate any items to the collection? These can be anything from old postcards and rugby club programmes to family heirlooms!

All we ask is they have a connection to old town Llantrisant or its Freeman.

Even if you don't want to donate the item or place them on loan, we would like the opportunity to catalogue them for our files for future reference.

Find out more by contacting [dean@llantrisant.net](mailto:dean@llantrisant.net)

